

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Metro Custom Plastics Inc

Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center

EDA Support Launches Lean Journey

Client Profile:

Metro Custom Plastics (MCP) is a manufacturer of custom injection and rotational molded plastic products used in a wide variety of consumer and commercial products. Located in Arlington, Texas, the company employs under 50 people.

Situation:

Metro Custom was anxious to improve their customer specification development processes. In early 2005, the company learned about a Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center (TMAC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, Lean initiative, sponsored by the Economic Development Administration. The EDA initiative would provide an assessment, on-site Lean training and an improvement event, all at a nominal cost to the companies selected to participate. Metro Custom contacted TMAC for assistance with their Lean journey.

Solution:

Metro Custom's management participated in TMAC's Lean Executive Overview to learn about the unique EDA program. They committed to undertaking the Lean Assessment. As a result, Metro Custom was among the companies selected to participate in the full Lean initiative. The next step was a one-day Lean 101 training with simulation in which staff learned to reduce and/or eliminate non-valued-added activities. Improvement activities began with a two-day Value Stream Mapping event to document current versus future state processes. They concluded with a three-day Lean Office implementation to improve Metro Custom's sales order process. Metro Custom has indicated they are very satisfied with the work done by TMAC and have retained the center for current and future business coaching. Additional plans are underway to continue with projects such as 5S, Total Productive Maintenance, and Setup Reduction as part of a comprehensive Lean Management System. The EDA-sponsored Lean initiative proved to be just what this small manufacturer needed to begin its transformation.

Results:

- * Anticipated \$76,000 in cost savings.
- * Increased sales and retained sales in the amount of \$800,000.
- * Invested \$80,000 in capital equipment, training, and business investments.
- * Avoided \$12,000 in unnecessary investments.
- * Increased inventory turns resulting in enhanced cash flow.

Testimonial:

"Too often our tax dollars are spent exporting our jobs to other countries. It was great to see our tax dollars spent on strengthening Texas manufacturing and creating jobs here in Texas."

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Mike Havel, President